

# The Mirror

OF

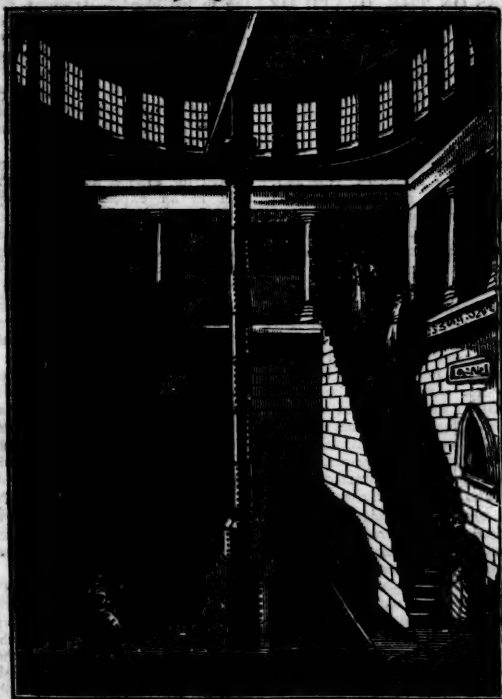
LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

No. 227.]

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1826.

[PRICE 2d.]

## The Nilometer.



THIS is a thin column, or pillar, marked in divisions to ascertain the rise and fall of the river Nile. It is situated in the midst of a round tower, on the island of Rhoda, between Cairo and Geeza, and is built in the middle of the river. In this tower is a cistern of marble through which the Nile flows; the bottom of the river and the bottom of the well being on the same level. From the centre of this well rises the slender pillar, which is marked into twenty divisions of twenty-two inches each; the space marked on the column is somewhat more than thirty-six feet.

This column is of the greatest importance to the emperor of the Turks—it being the chief means whereby he is enabled

to fix the tribute or tax, according to the height of the inundation.

The tower in which the Nilometer is placed is lighted by about eighteen or twenty windows, which form a bell around the base of the dome; immediately beneath these windows, and considerably above the top of the basin or well, are rooms or apartments for those who come to see the height of the Nile, from whence a flight of about twenty-five or thirty stone steps lead to the marble pavement which forms the top of the cistern or well, and in the centre of which the Nilometer is placed.

On ascertaining that the overflow will be such as to fertilise all the land, the grand canals are opened with great care.

mony, festivity, and rejoicing. As soon as the Nile retires from the fields they are sown with all sorts of grain, and in a short space of time the face of the whole country is variegated with the hues of flowering plants and of ripening corn.

### REMARKS ON THE DEATH OF WILLIAM RUFUS.

(For the Mirror.)

THAT William Rufus was accidentally slain by Walter Tyrril in the New Forest (Hampshire) has always been considered an undoubted fact, but Dr. Lingard's suspicions respecting it are not only novel, but so plausible that they merit the greatest attention, and as they have been noticed in the MIRROR, No. 222, I beg leave to offer a few observations on this so very interesting subject.

The character of Rufus' government and the consequent state of the nation, fully warrant Dr. Lingard's doubts. The people discontented and factious, were still more irritated by the most severe oppression; not only were they subjected to extravagant imposts, but their ancient and favourite sport was denied them. The finest forests in the country were for the king's use alone; by an arbitrary law, his subjects were prohibited hunting in them, and the transgressors of this law were more severely punished than murderers. The barons generally regretted the separation of Normandy from England. The most powerful considered William a usurper who reigned only by force; indeed so inveterate was their enmity, that William detected two conspiracies against his authority, consisting of the most puissant barons and prelates. His libertine conduct naturally aroused the indignation of the clergy, and his rapacity their hatred. Not satisfied with extortions on the barons and the people, he seized ecclesiastical property, ridiculed the priests, and appropriated convent plate to political uses. An act so sacrilegious must have excited in the clergy the warmest resentment. Probable enough, that a king so generally detested should fall a victim to conspiracy, that a few complotters instigated by religious frenzy and irritated by oppression, should commit a deed so salutary to their country, so grateful to Heaven. And if the monkish historians were acquainted with the fact, they politely passed it over, and only recorded the common opinion. If Rufus is murdered, whom shall we suspect? Them who were the most decided enemies to Rufus while living.

The most weighty objection to Dr. Lingard's conjecture, and which at first seems conclusive, is the circumstances

related in No. 222 of the MIRROR; but perhaps it is not an insuperable objection, at least there is still room for plausible supposition.

Dr. Lingard thus writes, "About sunset he (Rufus) was discovered by some countrymen lying on the ground weltering in his blood." It seems, therefore, that William fell unseen by his attendants; had they seen him fall, they doubtless would have carried the body away, instead of which, it lay in the wood several hours, and at length was discovered by accident. Hume says, that "Tyrril without informing any one of the accident, put spurs to his horse, hastened to the sea-shore, embarked for France, and joined the Crusade in an expedition to Jerusalem." This also implies that when the accident happened Tyrril and the king were alone. Now it is singular, that although the king and Tyrril were alone at the time of the alleged homicide, yet we have so minute an account of it. Who furnished this account? No one but Tyrril himself could; but he "always denied the charge, and after his return (from Palestine) when he had nothing to hope or fear, deposed upon oath before Suger, abbot of St. Denis, that he never saw the king on the day of his death, nor entered that part of the forest in which he fell." Who then first charged Tyrril with the accident? Who gave so circumstantial an account as this? "That Tyrril's arrow accidentally glancing from a tree, struck the king in the breast, and instantly slew him." The story seems to confute itself.

In the MIRROR, No. 222, it is stated that the proprietor of Avon Tyrril still pays an annual fine, because Tyrril escaped over that manor, owing to the negligence of the person who was then the owner, and from this it is inferred that he actually did escape. It was policy in the murderers to accuse some individual of the act; why Tyrril in particular we cannot now determine. Perhaps from reasons of which we are ignorant, they knew he could not instantly deny the charge. (Especially if, as Dr. Lingard hints, Tyrril was then out of the kingdom.) However, it appears to have been reported that the assassin was secreted in the forest, that upon this the passes were secured, and yet that Tyrril escaped. Now it is worthy remark, that the king lay dead a considerable time, and at length was found by some countrymen, who could not themselves have instantly set a guard round the forest; thus Tyrril had sufficient time to escape. All our historians assert that Tyrril immediately after

the accident, spurred his horse and fled to the coast; it is then probable, that he was far away before the body was found—before the passes were secured; and if Tyrril did pass the ford (now called Tyrril's Ford,) he passed it *before* the alarm was given and of course *before* the owner was on watch, who therefore was punished unjustly. As the murderers had charged Tyrril with the homicide, they no doubt fabricated the story of his escape, the more effectually to stop further inquiry, and to give it greater plausibility, charged the owner of this manor with allowing him to escape, but on what evidence, whether real or fictitious we are not informed, indeed, if we had recorded the evidence of a person who saw Tyrril pass this ford on the day of the murder, we should still be unable to decide, as Tyrril most solemnly asserted his innocence, and at this distant period, whom should we believe? Such conflicting evidence would not authorize any conclusion.

The charge against Tyrril is curious; how cautiously they accuse him, not of wilful, but accidental murder. As if conscious of his innocence, they take off all criminality from the action, and soften it down as much as possible.

The place was particularly favourable for the conspirators to effect their plan. Where should the king be slain, but in that forest which had been formed with so much oppression and cruelty, and which would give to the act the appearance of a divine judgment; and the people did consider that Rufus, and other relatives of the Norman conqueror who perished in that forest, had fallen victims to the righteous vengeance of Heaven.

From all the circumstances of the event as recorded by our historians, it may be inferred, that on a favourable opportunity presenting itself, the king was shot by one of the conspirators, and left dead; that on the accidental finding of the body, the forest was searched and guarded; that to prevent further inquiry, which might have led to disclosing the real perpetrators, it was reported that a Walter Tyrril had committed the murder, but unintentionally, (How well adapted was such a report to allay public anxiety!) and had escaped over one of the nearest fords; that to give greater colouring to the report, the owner of the manor in which the ford lay was fined for his presumed negligence; that in the absence of satisfactory evidence to disprove Tyrril's solemn asseverations, we should not consider him guilty, and that from the character of Rufus and his reign, it is more probable, that he was secretly

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assassinated by one of those ferocious barons, who so long had detested him, and that the monkish historians (whether purposely or not) recorded the popular opinion, which (at least) would preclude any stigma being thrown on the ecclesiastical order.

Whether his brother Henry was totally ignorant of such a conspiracy is rather doubtful. William was slain August 2. Henry was crowned, August 5. What time more favourable to Henry's partisans, than that when Robert was absent and could not support his claim? Immediately on the king's murder, without paying any regard to the deceased monarch, Henry and his friends fly to Winchester and seize the treasury; Henry then hastens to London, and is crowned on the third day after his brother's death; while William is carried to Winchester by the country-people and there obscurely interred. And when Henry had gained the throne he made no inquiry respecting his brother's death, but acted as if he were perfectly satisfied on the subject. Hume partly accounts for this strange conduct by saying; "His courtiers were negligent in performing the last duties to a master who was so little beloved; and every one was too much occupied in the *interesting object of fixing a successor*, to attend the funeral of a dead sovereign." Perhaps this is true; though in a different sense to that which the writer intends to convey. J.

#### ON THE TITLES "ESQUIRE" AND "GENTLEMAN."

(For the Mirror.)

It has been a subject of great doubt amongst our sagest lawyers, to whom the title of esquire belonged. Sir William Blackstone observes, that it is, indeed, a matter somewhat unsettled what constitutes the distinction, or who is a real esquire. Sir Edward Coke remarks, every squire is a gentleman and every gentleman is one *qui arma gerit*, (who bears coat armour), the grant of which adds gentility to a man's family.

The probability is, that an esquire was anciently the person who attended a knight in time of war, and carried his shield, &c.; which, in fact is so defined by some of the old writers. This title has not, however, for a long time, had any relation to the office of the person, as to carry arms, &c. Those to whom the title of esquire is now of right due, are all noblemen's younger sons, and the eldest sons of such younger sons; the eldest sons of knights, and their eldest sons; the officers of the king's courts, and of

his household; counsellors at law, justices of the peace, &c.; though those latter are only esquires in reputation; besides, a justice of the peace holds this title no longer than he is in commission, in case he is not otherwise qualified to bear it; but a sheriff of a county, who is a superior officer, retains the title of esquire during life, in consequence of the trust once reposed in him; the heads of some ancient families are said to be esquires by prescription. There are four esquires of the body to attend the king's person. These esquires of the king, it is said, are such as have that title by creation, wherein there is some formality used, as the putting about their necks a collar of SS, and bestowing on them a pair of silver-spurs, &c. If an esquire, say the old law books, be arraigned of high treason, he ought to be tried by a jury each whereof have forty shillings of freehold, and one hundred pounds in goods; and a knight has no other privilege. The heir apparent of an esquire is privileged to keep greyhounds, setting-dogs, or nets to take partridges and pheasants, though he cannot dispend ten pounds of estate of inheritance, or the value of thirty pounds, of estate for life.

Chamberlayne says, that in strictness, a gentleman is one whose ancestors have been freemen, and have owed obedience to none but their prince; on which footing no man can be a gentleman but one who is born such. But among us, the term gentleman is applicable to all above yeomen; so that noblemen may properly be called gentlemen. In our statutes, *gentilis homo* was adjudged a good addition for a gentleman. 27 Edw. III. The addition of knight is very ancient, but, that of esquire or gentleman was rare before 1 Hen. V. Sir Thomas Smith, who wrote in the time of Edward VI, on the dignity and titles says, "As for gentlemen they be made good cheap in this kingdom, for whosoever studieth the laws of the realm, who studies in the universities, who possesses the liberal sciences, and, to be short, who can live idly and without manual labour, and will bear the port, charge, and countenance of a gentleman, he shall be called master, and shall be taken for a gentleman."

In "Bird's Magazine of Honour," printed in the year 1642, is a further description of the meaning of the term "gentleman." After quoting the above passage from sir Thomas Smith, he concludes, "for this is the title (master) that men give to esquires and other gentlemen." And proceeds thus, "For true it is with us, as one said, *tanti eris alus quanti tibi fueris*; and, if needs be, a

king of heralds shall for money give him arms newly made, and invented with the crest and all; the title whereof he shall pretend to have been found by the said herald in perusing and viewing of old registers, where his ancestors in time past had been recorded to bear the same; or if he will do it more truly, and of better faith, he will write that former merits of, and certain qualities that he doth see in him, and for sundry noble acts which he hath performed, he, by the authority which he hath, as king of heralds in his province, and of arms, give unto him and his heirs these, and these heroicall bearings in arms."

There was said to have been an old law in Spain, which decreed that if a gentleman was convicted of even a capital offence, he should be pardoned on pleading his having been intoxicated at the time he committed it, it being supposed that any who bore the character of gentility would more readily suffer death than confess himself capable of committing such a vice. Lord Halifax, however, more wisely decrees, that where a little rogue would deserve to be fined and imprisoned, if a lord should be guilty of the same practices, I would have him hanged, out of respect to his quality. And again, when men of quality become scoundrels, it was no wonder at all if scoundrels should be made men of quality. F. R. Y.

## The Novelist.

No. XCIII.

### THE EISTEDDVOD.

"Most lov'd! I've struck my lyre for thee,  
Till my soul's intense distress  
Shrick'd on the wrong strings, piteously  
As a blast i' the wilderness!"

MS. Poem.

It was a cheerless hour—clouds and darkness had long obscured Castell Dinas Bran, the desolate abode of the fairest maiden in all North Wales; and, but for the blaze of wood-fires which ever and anon cast a flickering glare through the loopholes and unglazed windows of the edifice, what stranger would have dreamt that there, upon the summit of one of the highest mountains that bound the valley of Iangollen, stood a residence for human beings? Yet so it was, though well might the solitary wayfarer in the vale have deemed the red light thence proceeding but a watch or a beacon fire. But the castle this night presented a scene of unusual festivity. It was the residence of Ednyved Vychan, celebrated in the Cambrian annals for might and prowess in war. His joy and pride were centred

in his only daughter, the beautiful Myrfanwy, who, during her father's frequent absents from the castle, dwelt there in a state of loneliness and desolation. Seldom did the walls of the gloomy and almost inaccessible Dinas Bran echo to the voices of mirth and minstrelsy; yet its lord, on his occasional returns from battle, desirous of remunerating his beloved child for her seclusion and deprivations, was wont, in the true style of Welsh hospitality, to open his doors, and welcome all who chose to enter therein; and being also of considerable consequence, he took it in turns with other princes and chieftains of North Wales, to have the *Eisteddvod*, or *Congress of Bards*, celebrated at Dinas Bran. The Cambrians considered it almost a religious duty to encourage the music and poetry of their own nation, a music and poetry as wild and magnificent as the land of its birth. To the best poet (and many departments of literature were comprehended under the sublime appellation of poetry) and to the best musician were awarded at each congress superb prizes; but those in whom centred excellence in both the delicious arts, were allowed to name themselves what these should be. This night the *Eisteddvod* was held at Dinas Bran, and many bards of celebrity were, with anxious hearts and countenances, seated in the great hall, only awaiting, ere they commenced their important trial, the entrance of Lord Vychan, Myrfanwy, and those guests adjudged competent to be arbitrators on this interesting occasion. Suddenly, a youth, whom they knew not, entered the hall, wet, indeed, from the storms of night, but elegantly, though martially attired, and stepping up to the *dais*, where the minstrels were ranged, he seated himself below the last of them; so noble was his bearing, that the chief bard arose from an unaccountable impulse of respect, and offered him his seat, which the youth, bowing to the reverend man, modestly declined. A lad who followed with a harp richly ornamented, placed it before the stranger, and making a low reverence, retired. The minstrels were astonished, and various surmises took possession of their minds. There was but one, the prince indeed of bards at that period, with whom they could identify the unknown, but he was watching the movements of the English forces—he was at variance with the Lord Vychan, his rival in the field—and he, the royal minstrel of Wales, was not likely to mingle with bards of low degree, and give such a publicity to his splendid talents. Thoughts came wildering over the minstrel spirits in that castle hall, dim and

undefined as the light mists brushing the bosoms of the mountains, while the unconscious subject of them sat as if in a fit of abstraction, gazing with moveless eyes fixed on the open entrance to the apartment, although, indeed, at times he struck a few chords on his harp, so sweet, so sad, so tender, and so fraught with the deep despairing wretchedness of overwrought feeling, that the minstrels, who were well capable of interpreting the language of a strain thus voluptuously sad, answered it by tears. At length the company entered, and in the midst of them was Myrfanwy, splendid in beauty and attire, and supported by an elegant youth. The countenance of the stranger minstrel betrayed the conflict of his feelings—feelings of agony, which, overpowering the tender and delicate spirit of youth, the young have seldom sufficient strength or artifice to conceal. A grand chorus of voices and instruments, in which the youth took no part, hailed the illustrious assembly; after which the *Bardd Cadeiriawg* (or chief bard) read the laws of the *Eisteddvod*, from whence it appeared the stranger was taking unwarrantable liberty in thus mingling with the congress, and yet did none dare to lift up his voice to oppose him. Then came contests in poetry, eloquence, logic, historical narration, &c., and music, and lastly, in music and poetry united. One bard sung the praise of Arthur, the founder of chivalry; one, of the Prince Cynan, who framed the laws of the *Eisteddvod*; one proclaimed the deeds of Dafydd, king and patron saint of Wales; one eulogized Lylwarch Hên, the renowned poet; and another sung the valiant deeds of the Lord Vychan and his ancestors; each in succession took a subject, and the last bard sang the heroic acts of Hoel ap Dwain Gwinedd, at which Ednyved Vychan frowned, for dark were his thoughts against the minstrel prince and hero. Having concluded his performance, the last bard tapped the young stranger on his shoulder, and whispered, that though contrary to the laws of the *Eisteddvod* to admit a wandering minstrel in competition with those who had received a professional education, yet for this time rigour would not be exercised against a youth; and, therefore, if he had ought to offer as a candidate for public favour, the moment was arrived. The youth arose, and stepping from the circle, placed himself, at the distance of a few yards, before Myrfanwy, on whose fair brow the frown of anger was apparent; and very fiercely too did the young Owen, who sought her hand, regard the bold stranger, as did also the Lord Vychan. Eminently beautiful

stood the youth before that illustrious assembly; undaunted was his mien, and his elegant and perfect form was profusely adorned with those superb torques, or golden wreaths, commonly the meed of extraordinary heroes. He perceived that the Lord Ednyved and Myrfanwy recognized him in wrath; when once more gazing at the frowning fair one, he touched his harp, whence proceeded low, melancholy, and confused murmurs, sufficiently indicating the uncertain state of his thoughts; gradually, however, as the sun breaks through a mist, came tones of clearness, strength, and exquisite feeling, in a symphony of extreme delicacy, a prelude to a song, wherein it was difficult to decide, whether the pathos and sweetness of the voice, the mellifluous flow of the instrument, or the ethereal beauty of the poetry, were pre-eminent. The bards arose simultaneously, and bent forward, as if fearful of losing one note of the entrancing melody, while Myrfanwy blushed deeply on perceiving that the ode was in honour of herself. The most exquisite strain depicted her beauty; tones, slow, feeble, and wailing, portrayed the agonies of a heart all-devoted to her, yet hopeless of success; a livelier measure imaged those golden dreams of hope, which at times gave fresh life to the lover's worn breast; and this then suddenly changed to a fierce, tumultuous strain, indicating the terrible jealousy of scorned affection; then, in tones yet more lugubrious, and poetry equally vivid, was the lover's despair depicted, and the interminable wretchedness of his soul! Tears stood in the eyes of the sterner sex, and the ladies, all save Myrfanwy, sobbed aloud. The speaking harp rung terribly; darkness and horror seemed gathering round, as if hope and enjoyment were in this world no more; as if all things were about to return to their primitive chaos, and as if the souls of those who hearkened to this extraordinary music were on the verge of being turned adrift to wander in darkness, confusion, and illimitable space for ever! The chords became more dreary, deep, and solemn; the vibrating strings, as if instinct with life, groaned in agony. The voice of the singer faltered—tears streamed from his eyes—and it was evident that the extremity of suffering he so well knew how to paint, was his to feel. In woeful and broken cadences the dying music faltered on, till a discordant crash, followed by a dreary pause, figured the bursting of the over-wrought heart, and the end of earthly misery. The strain, too, was concluded; and after a dead silence of some minutes, loud and long applauses shook the hall, and the arbi-

trators, with the Bardd Cadeiriawg, unanimously voted the prize to the stranger. "Declare, then," said Ednyved Vychan, "whom thou art, and what thou dost desire." In a lofty strain of poetry, the youth declared "he was that son of Gwl-nedd of whom the bard had sung; that he had heard where the next Eisteddod was appointed; that, rejected of his long loved Myrfanwy, he had projected the design of securing by talent what neither military prowess nor ardent affection could obtain; that to him the prize had been decreed, and that prize must be Myrfanwy!"—"Wed the rival of my father?" exclaimed the lady—"never!"—"Never!" echoed the stern parent.—"Never!" shouted the intemperate Owen, and seizing a sword, made a desperate thrust at Hoel. The prince parried the blow, and drawing a poignard from his bosom, inflicted a wound upon his opponent, that laid him bleeding and lifeless at his feet; then applying a horn to his lips, at his long and drear blast a troop of soldiers rushed in, who filled the hall. Now was a desperate conflict on the eve of ensuing, but the prince, in a tone which enforced obedience, commanded both parties to desist. Then addressing himself to Lord Vychan, "Where," said he, "wilt thou be, if I choose to avail me of thine unprotected state? Few and weak are thy friends to struggle with my well-armed retainers; nor would they have appeared but for yon rash boy, who has fallen a just victim to his unbridled passion, and glaring breach of manly feeling and hospitality! He knew not that I was armed, yet sought my life! No fault was this of thine, Ednyved; and I scorn to wreak on my rival in war, a vengeance similar to that which I have inflicted on my rival in the affections of thy child. I scorn to turn a meeting, sacred to the peaceful interests of literature, into a scene of bloodshed and desolation, and to pollute this castle, whose gates have to-night stood open for friend or foe, in the true spirit of Cambrian hospitality, with slaughter. I scorn to seize, as well I might, the weak Myrfanwy, and bear her off amid mine armed host, like a kid snatched from the herd, by the eagles of Snowdon. No, Ednyved! hence, with your good pleasure shall I depart, and future ages may indeed, recount, that Hoel died for the sake of Myrfanwy; but never shall a stigma so vile attach to the name of the prince, the warrior, and the bard, as that of a breach of the laws of honour, humanity, and hospitality. Never shall it be recorded that Hoel warred against the defenceless. March, my men! Forward. Lillywellyn with the harp!



Llangollen receives us this night; to-morrow shall see us far from the Castell Dinas Bran. Farewell, Ednyved Vychan; farewell, Myrfanwy!"

The noble youth followed his men, while the late mirth was changed into astonishment, grief, and murmuring; the maiden sorrowed for the untimely fate of Owen, yet did not for his sake die unwedded. The talented Hoel, urged to desperation, performed prodigies of valour, and at length found in battle a death which he had unremittingly sought, in the hope of terminating that mortal agony, that madness of feeling, that sorrow above all sorrows, which is too bitter for finely touched spirits to endure and live!

M. L. B.

### SPIRIT OF THE Public Journals.

#### BOARD AND LODGING.

\* Two (large) gentlemen of respectability are desirous of obtaining board and lodging in a genteel private family. They are of regular habits, and would be found no intruders on the regulation of the domestic circle. Letters addressed (post paid) to X. Y. at ———— Times.

"HALF-A-GUINEA a week for coals!" thought I, "throw coals to the dogs, and the landlady with them, before I submit to this brumal chicanery."—"Half-a-guinea a week for coals!" re-echoed my friend Dapper, throwing himself backwards in his chair, and elevating his legs to an awful height—"No, no, Mrs. Ramsbottom, we'll follow Keeper on his travels first." The encroaching dame rubbed her hands with a washer-woman-like grace, muttered some unmeaning mumble, and made her exit. Friend Dapper and myself are two bachelors, (one of us is a Bachelor of Arts), and not being burdened with a troublesome load of income, we have united our purses, and by this social juncture, have contrived to board and lodge together in a more convincing style, than either of us could have done separately. Our gracious landlady came into existence on the top of some mountain in a Swiss canton, and certes retains to this day a frostiness of disposition, that would vie with the coldest avalanche in her country. We have resided in her house for something more than three months, and have generally escaped civil wars and domestic broils. To be sure, we have occasionally been favoured with her petulant eloquence, for tripping up stairs with unwiped shoes, slamming doors with impatient vengeance, and rousing the inmates sometimes from their midnight snooze—but this is allowed to be "all in the

family way." We have scarcely ever glimpsed her horned spouse; for aught we know, he may be sometimes taking an airing in his wife's coal-hole for spousal disobedience, or be seated on the mantle-piece, and compelled to squat there, till taken down again. At all events, he is quite an underling in our present domain, and serves instead of his wife's bell, to call the servant and carry messages. His stature is very dwarfish, and he is of such a ghastly paleness in face, that he would terrify in a dark passage; to the personages already introduced, add, one flowy good-tempered housemaid, and a superannuated tom-cat, reader, and you have at once before you all the live stock on our premises.

After Mrs. Ramsbottom's departure, and a momentary mutual gape of suspense, Dapper and myself consulted on future proceedings—"To pay, or not to pay, that was the question,"—we perceived it was most convenient to our pockets to do the latter; without hesitating to inquire whether "'twas nobler" to bear the "sting" of "outrageous" pay, determined on a speedy removal.

"When will the advertisement appear, sir?" "On Thursday next," replied the silver-haired old clerk, brushing my crown-pieces into his money receptacle with conscious nonchalance—"Thank you, sir." The door of the office swung back to its place, and I was soon paddling my way on the sloppy pavement of Fleet-street. "How very abrupt you are!" exclaims my fancied reader, "transporting me from your drawing room to a newspaper office!"—I bow my assent, and have only to say, that *ellipsis* is an allowable figure in rhetoric, and may be legally introduced into my "Board and Lodging."—Thursday came, and presented me (to speak *Hibernice*) with sufficient letters to last me for the remainder of my days. Four consecutive postmen were each loaded with a dozen epistles for X. Y. and many were personally delivered, thus one solitary seven lines in the Times, inspired about sixty pens, and occasioned a waste of many quires of paper. "How great a matter a little fire kindleth!" The housemaid's countenance was for the remainder of this day illumined with a timid, reluctant smirk, whenever she appeared. Dapper did little else but grin over the outside scrawls of the letters, while I was busied in anatomizing their contents, and selecting such as were deemed answerable. Need I explain the result of my discoveries?—One was from an ignorant, but exalted, laundress, stating, that she "rezided in a werry gentell sitivation, and felt quite 'sartin as how

the gentlemen would be well accommodated in her lodgin'." Another came from a sea-captain, and stated, that we might "jump into a good birth if we chose to tack over to him," that he had a snug little cottage, *only* troubled with wife and three children," and that "on winter nights we might have a sip of hot grog." Another, sealed with a dashing coat of arms, and remarkably square at the corners, was from a bachelor, whose house was "rather too extensive for himself and servant"—with him we should experience "every domestic comfort." I shall only mention two more, which were rather mysterious to our view, and afforded subject for various gallant conjectures; one was from a "lady of respectability," informing us, that she had "two daughters, one eighteen, and the other nineteen years of age;" after stating this, and that, "emolument was not her principal aim," added, that she was "desirous of meeting with *two agreeable young men for boarders!*"—The other was equally pleasing to us; explaining, that there was a "daughter just turned twenty, that there were plenty of *young ladies*, who made frequent cheerful visits;" the summing up, as the judge calls it, was very endearing for a stranger, she hoped to "find two pleasant additions to their *family circle!*"—On concluding the perusal of these complaisant productions, a mutual stroke of chins, a bridled erection of heads, and satisfactory survey of the person, passed between Dapper and myself; both of us were convinced that a sight would be sufficient to convince the lady, that we were the "pleasant additions." Within half an hour, we were duly caparisoned, and externally armed with inspiration from the Graces for the approaching interview—but, alas!

"'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view,  
And robs the mountain in its azure hue."

By an unaccountable oversight, we did not discover, till a second glance, that, in a serene corner of the epistle, terms were mentioned! they appeared to claim a very warm consanguinity with "emolument;" and fearful that both might conduct us to the same finis, we delivered these gallant enticers to the care of a paper cupboard. After an arduous selection from the remaining bundle, we commenced with the guidance of half a dozen that directed us, severally, to six different quarters of the metropolis. The remainder of this paper will contain an account of our proceedings and "hair breath 'scapes."

Yellow fogs were swimming in the bilious air, and cold steams evaporating

from the muddy drains, when Dapper, "smiling like May-morn," and myself in good spirits, from sundry potations of well-sugared coffee, entered briskly on our travels. The first house we arrived at was in a square, which, for the present, must be nameless. The outside walls were dingy, and crusted like rasped rolls, and the whole edifice was quite of the *Broddignag* order—windows sinking into their cases, like withered cheeks in a decline. The stony grandeur and reverential aspect of the building awed for a moment our first glimpse, and woke up sighs prophetic of a non-residence there. Dapper's patrician appeal to the knocker startled me from a reverie I was enjoying over the darkling depth of the area. A freckled servant, with a nose of *astronomical* consequence, snarled an abortive answer to the question, "is your mistress at home?" Having used a little *manual skill* in the arrangement of our hair, and stretched our sartrons to their symmetrical fit, we marched through the hall with that inward independence felt by those about to experience the delight of prying, inquiring, and rejecting—if the apartments "were not exactly what was required." Alas! for the miserable endurance of lodging-house keepers, letters, and *hoc genus omne!* Compelled to listen and answer to the impertinent, unclose the cupboards for their satisfaction, unravel domestic regulations, traverse, mount, descend, and screw up replies to feed the whims of curiosity—but I can spare no more condolence here.

The parlour door opened, and a motley circle of persons of various ages, arranged round a breakfast table, were performing their matin mastications; but our approach interrupted their engagement. One old fellow, with a wig, blinked his eyes, and could not conceal the toast which bulged through his half-opened lips. Another, with a snuffy visage, lolled back in his chair, and fairly put on spectacles to scrutinize us; while a youth, apparently about eighteen, with a neck encased in deep cravat, gave a condescending turn to his pate, and then resumed his tattoo on the cloth. In addition to these perplexing unpleasanties, there were, besides, three tall daughters, who, with a military exactness, held their cups very steadily at an equal distance from the saucers and their mouths, and daunted us with their ocular meaning. An uncouth, snivelling, old maid wriggled by their side. But surely this was not metropolitan politeness! The servant had made some blunder in our announcement; or they expected balliffs, and mistook us for these *men-hounds*; or, lastly, they



were unused to such early visitors. Explain it as you will, we were quite levelled beneath the staring coterie, and at once gave up all hopes of domesticating with such unmannerly creatures. Poor Dapper was more overcome than myself, and kept on such good terms with the wall, that the crown of his hat, which he held behind him, was rendered almost beaverless through the friction it had endured.

"I believe," cried Dapper; here confusion choked his trembling utterance, and a regular smile ran round the table at this commenced enunciation of the apostolic creed. His inexplicable perturbation so amused me, that had it not been for some stoic endowments I possessed, laughter must have relieved me. However, giving my lips a primordial bite, and receiving, in the hollow of my hand, a duplicate of "hems," I finished his sentence—"I believe, madam," directing my speech to a portly dame, "we had the pleasure of receiving an answer to our advertisement for"—"I beg your pardon, sir, pray *what* did you say?" Here was an accumulation of endurances! compelled to give a second edition to my speech! "I believe, madam, (colouring with a virgin-like blush) we had the pleasure of receiving an answer to our advertisement for board and lodging, from you; we have, therefore,"—"Board and lodging with us sir!—dear me! sir, you have been mistaken; we receive no boarders or lodgers here but those of our own family. Board and lodging '*here*, sir! oh dear, dear! ha! ha! ha! dear me, sir, I fear you have been mistaken.'" "It's damned odd," (quasi *hodd* pronounced) muttered the dandy's unloosened lips, "it's damned odd, I think. We turned board-and-lodging-house keepers! why, 'pon my soul, we are rising in the world!" Then followed several humphs from the old men, a freezing grin from the old maid, while the daughters were engaged in alternate giggles. My situation was far from being enviable. I made a hasty bow, not quite so graceful as Beau Nash's (one of the wise men of Bath), and screwing out a "beg pardon," walked backwards out of the room, and almost upset Dapper, who had sided off to the open door during my fluttering colloquy. This was but a bad omen of our morning adventures; but we adjusted our neckcloths, endeavoured to laugh away the feeling of *gaucherie*, and continued our travels.

The next mansion we entered was of a humbler cast than the preceding one; unsocial and comfortless, both internally and externally; it was, in fact, nothing more

or less than a regular lodging-house, and, like bits of tumbling-down nobility struggling for aristocratical show, presented, amidst its gaudy furniture, a mere apology for gentility. There was, for instance, a half-burnished lamp suspended in the passage, with cracked glasses and a rusty chain; a diamond-cut hall, with very common ragged mats, and stair-carpets of a flaming hue, but disclosing the wood through their worn-out edges. The landlady was quite consistent with the house, awkwardly assuming the airs of high breeding, without the natural tact of supporting their assumption.

After a due perambulation of the parlour, where I was more busied in marking the mistress than her apartment, we were introduced to her drawing-room. Our conductress taking the lead, and having opened the door with a speedy boldness, she looked round on us with an Amazonian glance, signifying, "if my parlour has not delighted, my superior drawing-room must!" We were not permitted to take precedence in our remarks; and the following uninterrupted flowing observations dropped "like manna" from her lips:—"This is our drawing-room, gentlemen, where we assemble for dinner and other meals. It is a spacious room, very warm in winter, with a pleasant view from the window; wainscoats papered, sideboards for convenience, a handsome bookcase, and with the unusual advantage of a piano for those who are musical; some of our gentlemen play. I am sure you would find every attention paid. We keep a good table, and are visited by Captain N., Lieutenant C., and the Reverend Mr. Thoughtful. The curtains, you perceive, are of fine morocco; a man-servant cleans the shoes, the street is excellently situated, the house is always in regular discipline—I have no doubt you will find every thing satisfactory!" Well! this was a tolerable lengthy strain without receiving one reply. By this time we entered through folding-doors to examine the bed-chambers, where the chairs were the best part of the furniture! "You would find this an airy room to sleep in, the bed is made from the best feathers"—defend us! she was about to recommence, when, fortunately, I averted her purpose. "Pray, Mrs. Larkhall, have you any family?" Her countenance brightened at the question, she looked smilingly, as the bard of Avon says, and replied with a prefacing nod, "O yes, sir, I have three daughters, *all grown up*, (this emphatically,) besides some little ones; we all meet together." A fortuitous glance at the door presented me with a sight of one of her sylphs, who, it appears, marched languidly and inter-

estingly into the room; just as her mother mentioned her jewels—for, no doubt, she was another Cornelia. This same damsel was garbed very fashionably in black, of a symmetrical figure, and repeated her visits to the drawing-room once or twice. The mother, no doubt, had her aim, and Dapper and I were really cruel enough to guess it; most likely the reader will do the same, therefore we will not relate the result of our guess.

"What may be your terms, Mrs. Larkhall?"—"Why, sir, as I always make a point (we have since heard of this lady's points, some of them very far from 'good' ones) of mentioning the lowest at once—two hundred and fifty guineas a-year for both."—"Hem! hem! hem! very well, we will either call or write when we have determined. Good day, Mrs. Larkhall." Her jaw fell doubtfully, and we descended the stairs, and soon were over a bridge "and far away."

We recollected, as we were hastening to make our inquiries at an academy, that our supposed laundress' mansion was very near; so from a laudable feeling of curiosity, more than any expectation of settling, we "just popped in." Our suspicions were soon realized. Mrs. Susannah Starch (for this was the name on the door-plate) appeared the fat and jolly wearer of fifty years. Her crisped curls were compactly arranged on her forehead, and vied, in formality, the shapely cap that surmounted them. Her enormous grossness gave all the dignity to her person that flesh can impart. Her hands were of a vulgar mould, but unspotted as her finest muslin. She was, indeed, (taking her apron into consideration,) what is called, in the language of common sense, "a very respectable looking body." She was routing some breechless urchins from the passage when we entered, evidently desirous of "making an impression." As before, a parlour was our first conventicle; a dismal square kind of furnished den, with a grate without fire, fronted with curling shavings; a round table turned up in a corner, and a small recess where the "Family Bible" and the "Whole Duty of Man" were wedged immovably neat among a few other books. I felt so chilled at all I saw since my entrance, that I wished to have made some apology, and save the laundress her tongue, but it was too late! "We be in a bit of a muckle, sirs, to-day, what don't hap very often, I assure ye. I be a widowed woman, and, since my good man's death, I've had lodgers—" here was a pause, and then "poor dear man!" Naturally imagining she alluded to her husband, I asked what occupation he followed. "Okkepation!

Lord love ye! he was a gentleman, a *born* gentleman; but some how or other, poor thing! he came to be mainly reduced. Poor gentleman, what a fine reader! he'd come down and make'en so agreeable of a night, that he would, and read so *genteely* while I aimed his shirt on my lap, poor dear! he had the room above, and never left it till he died." The reader will be thinking in what way this speech concerned our lodging? Perhaps it was that crafty and circuitous method which many adopt to recommend their lodgings, who hope the praise of the past will ensure the value of the future. I shall not stop to describe the apartments destined for her lodgers; the bed-rooms were scarcely large enough for a seaman's hammock.

An academy! what odd associations arise at the sound of that word! A long, bony, ferret-eyed pedant, dressed in black, precise and petulantly inquisitive. A plain prison-looking house, with a lefty iron gate and a gravelled front yard; a captious mistress, with a pug-nose and scrutinous eye; scraped, cut, and blotted desks, ushers, birches, canes, and dog-leaved books, with the dinning school-bell—all these, *en masse*, danced about in my brain as we approached the academy. I was aware that I was not "going to school;" still old thoughts and remembrances are not easily to be disregarded. Though rather a *vieux garcon*, now when in the presence of my quondam pedagogue, I am thinking of eternal "*Pater Æneus*," "*in nova fert*," and "*omne quod erit in um*." We were followed up the school-yard by plenty of young eyes' gazes, and did not regret when we were seated in a drawing-room, somewhat fashionably furnished, by the aid of globes, books, maps, and writing wonders, embalmed in gilt frames. The master soon appeared, actually with a cane in his hand, school for the morning just having concluded. Powdered hair, spectacles, a pen lolled on his ear, a trim white neckcloth, and a black suit, gave a neat consequence to this master of the rod. He strutted up to us, with one hand in his breeches'-pocket, and with that movement of the person observed when one is travelling through the tangling stools, desks, and boxes in a school-room.

"I fear we have taken you away from your important duties, Mr. Mac Snapper."—"Don't mention it, sir; I beg you won't; beg you won't mention it."—"We have called in answer to your letter respecting our advertisement for 'Board and Lodging.'"—"Oh! oh!—yes, yes, yes; very good, sir; very good, sir. Why, let me—bless me, what a hubbub

those boys are making below; why, let me see, the terms would not be more than 100*l.* a-year for both, provided you have no objection to two beds in one room!! Your meals would be like my own, and Mrs. Mac Snapper is a very domesticated lady; would see to all your wants. One thing I must premise—my doors are closed by ten every night, except on peculiar occasions.”—“What may be the number of your pupils, Mr. Mac?”—Mr Snapper. “I beg your pardon! only sixty, sir; a very important charge, but the rising generation, you know, sir,—the rising generation, sir.”—“You are right sir; we will either write or call when we determine.” With this convenient and universal excuse for saying “I decline,” we parted—to meet no more.

(To be continued.)

#### A NIGHT SCENE IN BRAZIL.

He who has not personally experienced the enchantment of tranquil moonlight nights in these happy latitudes, can never be inspired, even by the most faithful description, with those feelings which scenes of such wondrous beauty excite in the mind of the beholder. A delicate transparent mist hangs over the country; the moon shines bright amid heavy and singularly grouped clouds; the outlines of the objects which are illuminated by it are clear and well defined, while a magic twilight seems to remove from the eye those which are in shade. Scarcely a breath of air is stirring, and the neighbouring mimosas, that have folded up their leaves to sleep, stand motionless beside the dark crowns of the mango, the jaca, and the ethereal jambos. Or sometimes a sudden wind arises, and the juiceless leaves of the *acaçu* (*Anacardium occidentale*) rustle, the richly flowered *grumijama* and *pitansa* (two kinds of Brazilian myrtle) let drop a fragrant shower of snow-white blossoms; the crowns of the majestic palms wave slowly over the silent roof which they overshadow, like a symbol of peace and tranquillity. Shrill cries of the cicada or grasshopper, and the tree-frog, make an incessant hum, and produce, by their monotony, a pleasing melancholy. A stream gently murmuring descends from the mountains, and the *Perdix guyanensis*, with its almost human voice, seems to call for help from a distance. Every quarter of an hour, different balsamic odours fill the air, and other flowers alternately unfold their leaves to the night, and almost overpower the senses with their perfume. Now, it is the bowers of *paullinias*, or the neighbouring orange grove; then, the thick

tufts of the *eupatoria*, or the bunches of the flowers of the palms suddenly bursting, which disclose their blossoms, and thus maintain a constant succession of fragrance. While the silent vegetable world, illuminated by swarms of fire-flies, as by a thousand moving stars, charms the night by its delicious effluvia, brilliant lightnings play incessantly in the horizon, and elevate the mind in joyful admiration to the stars, which, glowing in solemn silence in the firmament above the continent and ocean, fill the soul with a presentiment of still sublimer wonders. In the enjoyment of the peaceful and magic influence of such nights, the newly arrived European remembers with tender longings his native home, till the luxuriant scenery of the tropics has become to him a second country.—*Von Spir's Travels.*—*Time's Telescope.*

#### SUPERSTITIONS RESPECTING THUNDER AND LIGHTNING.

It was formerly the custom during thunder to invoke the aid of St. Barbara. The great bell of Malmsbury Abbey, called St. Adelm's bell, was also rung to drive away thunder and lightning. A similar practice was also resorted to in France, particularly at St. Germain's. In Herefordshire, says Mr. Aubrey, they lay a piece of iron on the barrel to keep the beer from souring, and the like is done in Germany.—*Aubrey MS.*, A.D. 1686.

The ancients had singular notions respecting lightning; they regarded it with a superstitious horror of which we can have but a faint conception, and as a visible manifestation of divine wrath; hence whatever was struck with it, was looked upon as sacred, (in its ceremonial sense of devoted or accursed,) and separated from human uses. The corpse of the person struck by lightning was never moved from its place; where it fell it lay, and, with every thing pertaining to it, was covered with earth, and encircled by a rail or mound.—*Ibid.*

#### The Selector;

OR,

#### CHOICE EXTRACTS FROM NEW WORKS.

##### THE MERMAID OF MARGATE.

ON Margate beach, where the sick one roams,  
And the sentimental reads;  
Where the maiden flirts, and the widow comes,  
Like the ocean—to cast her weeds;

Where urchins wander to pick up shells,  
And the cits to spy at the ships,  
Like the water gals at Sadler's Wells;  
And the chandler for watery dips!

There's a maiden sits by the ocean brim,  
As lovely and fair as sin!  
But woe, deep water, and woe to him,  
That she snareth like Peter Fin!

Her head is crown'd with pretty sea wares,  
And her locks are golden and loose;  
And seek to her feet, like other folks' heirs,  
To stand, of course, in her shoes!

And, all day long, she combeth them well,  
With a sea-shark's prickly jaw;  
And her mouth is just like a rose-lipp'd shell,  
The fairest that man e'er saw!

And the fishmonger, humble as love may be,  
Hath planted his seat by her side;  
Good even, fair maid! Is thy lover at sea,  
To make thee so watch the tide?

She turn'd about with her pearly brows,  
And clasp'd him by the hand:—  
'Come love, with me: I've a bonny house  
On the golden Goodwin Sand.'

And then she gave him a siren kiss,  
No honeycomb e'er was sweeter:  
Poor wretch! how little he dreamt for this  
That Peter should be salt-Peter!

And away with her prize to the wave she leapt,  
Not walking as damsels do,  
With toe and heel, as she ought to have stept,  
But she hopt like a kangaroo!

One plunge, and then the victim was blind,  
Whilst they gallop'd across the tide;  
At last, on the bank, he waked in his mind,  
And the beauty was by his side.

One half on the sand, and half in the sea,  
But his hair all began to stiffen;  
For when he look'd where her feet should be,  
She had no more feet than Miss Biffen!

But a scaly tail of a dolphin's growth,  
In the dabbling brine did soak:  
At last, she open'd her pearly mouth,  
Like an oyster, and thus she spoke:—

'You crimp't my father, who was a skate:  
And my sister, you sold—a maid,—  
So here remain for a fish'ry fate,  
For lost you are, and betray'd!'

And away she went, with a seagull's scream,  
And a splash of her saucy tail;  
In a moment he lost the silvery gleam  
That shone on her splendid mail!

The sun went down with a blood-red flame,  
And the sky grew cloudy and black,  
And the tumbling billows like leap frog came,  
Each over the other's back!

Ah, me! It had been a beautiful scene,  
With the safe terra-firma round;  
But the green water hillocks all seem'd to him,  
Like those in a church-yard ground:

And Christians love in the turf to lie,  
Not in watery graves to be;  
Nay, the very fishes will sooner die  
On the land than in the sea—

And whilst he stood, the watery strife  
Encroach'd on every hand,  
And the ground decreas'd, his moments of life  
Seem'd measur'd, like Time's, by sand:

And still the waters foam'd in, like ale,  
In front, and on either flank,  
He knew that Goodwin and Co. must fail,  
There was such a run on the bank.

A little more, and a little more,  
The surges came tumbling in;  
He sang the evening hymn twice o'er,  
And thought of every sin!

Each flounder and plaice lay cold at his heart,  
As cold as his marble slab;  
And he thought he felt in every part,  
The pincers of scalded crab:

The squealing lobsters that he had boll'd  
And the little potted shrimps,  
All the horny prawns he had ever spoil'd  
Gnawed into his soul like imps!

And the billows were wandering to and fro,  
And the glorious sun was sunk,  
And day getting black in the face, as tho'  
Of the night-shade he had drunk!

Had there been but a smuggler's cargo adrift,  
One tub, or keg, to be seen,  
It might have given his spirits a lift,  
Or an *anker* where *hope* might lean!

But there was not a box or a beam afloat,  
To raft him from that sad place;  
Not a skiff, nor a yawl, or a mackerel boat,  
Nor a smack upon Neptune's face.

At last, his lingering hopes to buoy,  
He saw a sail and a mast,  
And called 'Ahoy!'—but it was not a hoy,  
And so the vessel went past.

And with saucy wing that flapp'd in his face,  
The wild bird about him flew,  
With a shrilly scream, that twitted his case,  
Why, thou art a sea-gull too!

And lo! the tide was over his feet:  
Oh! his heart began to freeze,  
And slowly to pulse,—in another beat  
The wave was up to his knees!

He was deafen'd amidst the mountain-tops,  
And the salt spray blinded his eyes,  
And wash'd away the other salt-drops  
That grief had caused to arise.

But just as his body was all afloat,  
And the surges above him broke,  
He was saved from the hungry deep by a boat  
Of Deal—(but builded of oak.)

The skipper gave him a dram, as he lay,  
And chafed his shivering skin;  
And the angel return'd, that was flying away  
With the spirit of Peter Fin!

*Whims and Oddities.*

### LACONISMS.

AN elegant work, entitled *Laconics, or The Best Words of the Best Authors*, has attracted our notice, and we do not hesitate to pronounce it to be a most me-

stirious and useful little publication. The selections from the works of our most esteemed writers are highly judicious and select, and their happy arrangement does great credit to the compiler of this instructive series. We present our readers with the following extracts :—

A MAP does not exhibit a more distinct view of the boundaries and situation of every country than its news does a picture of the genius and morals of its inhabitants.—*Goldsmith.*

HE who is always in want of something cannot be very rich. 'Tis a poor wit who lives by borrowing the words, decisions, men, inventions, and actions, of others.—*Lavater.*

IN story-telling, besides the marking distinct characters, and selecting pertinent circumstances, it is likewise necessary to leave off in time, and end smartly. So that there is a kind of drama in the forming of a story, and the manner of conducting and pointing it, is the same as in an epigram. It is a miserable thing, after one hath raised the expectation of the company by humorous characters, and a pretty conceit, to pursue the matter too far. There is no retreating, and how poor is it for a story-teller to end his relation by saying, "that's all!"—*Steele.*

COMMONLY, physicians, like beer, are best when they are old; and lawyers, like bread, when they are young and new.—*Fuller.*

LONDON is nothing to some people; but to a man whose pleasure is intellectual, London is the place. And there is no place where economy can be so well practised as in London; more can be had here for the money, even by ladies, than every where else. You cannot play tricks with your fortune in a small place; you must make a uniform appearance. Here a lady may have well-furnished apartments, and elegant dress, without any meat in her kitchen.—*Johnson.*

THOSE who are taken with the outward show of things, think that there is more beauty in persons who are trimmed, curled, and painted, than uncorrupt nature can give; as if beauty were merely the corruption of manners.—*Quintilian.*

NATURE has left every man a capacity of being agreeable, though not of shining in company; and there are a hundred men sufficiently qualified for both who, by a very few faults, that they might correct in half an hour, are not so much as tolerable.—*Swift.*

DEATH may be said with almost equal propriety to confer as well as to level all distinctions. In consequence of that event, a kind of chemical operation takes place; for those characters which were mixed with the gross particles of vice by being thrown into the alembic of flattery, are sublimated into the essence of virtue.—*Kell.*

HE who despises the great is condemned to honour the little; and he who is in love with trifles can have no taste for the great.—*Lavater.*

THE vanity of human life is like a river, constantly passing away, and yet constantly coming on.—*Pope.*

CIRCLES are prais'd, not that abound  
In largeness, but th' exactly round;  
So life we praise that does excel  
Not in much time, but acting well.

*Waller.*

GREAT lords, by reason of their flatterers, are the first that know their own virtues, and the last that know their own vices; some of them are ashamed upwards, because their ancestors were too great. Others are ashamed downwards, because they were too little.—*Selden.*

THE attempt of the poetical populace of the present day to obtain an ostracism against Pope, is as easily accounted for as the Athenian's shell against Aristides;—they are tired of hearing him always called 'THE JUST.' They are also fighting for life; for if he maintains his station, they will reach their own by falling.—*Lord Byron.*

HOWEVER low and poor the taking of snuff argues a man to be in his stock of thoughts, or means to employ his brains and his fingers; yet there is a poorer creature in the world than he, and this is a borrower of snuff; a fellow that keeps no box of his own, but is always asking others for a pinch. Such poor rogues put me always in mind of a common phrase among school-boys when they are composing their exercise, who run to an upper scholar, and cry, "Pray give me a little sense?"—*Steele.*

I WOULD have all men elevated to as great a height as they can discover a lustre to the naked eye.—*Shenstone.*

A MAN's true merit 'tis not hard to find;  
But each man's secret standard in his mind,  
That casting weight pride adds to emptiness,  
This who can gratify? for who can guess?

*Pope.*

## Miscellanies.

### REMARKABLE FROSTS.

Year.

220. Frost in Britain that lasted 5 months.  
 250. The Thames frozen 9 weeks.  
 291. Most rivers in Britain frozen 6 weeks.  
 359. Severe frost in Scotland for 14 weeks.  
 508. The rivers in Britain frozen for 2 months.  
 558. The Danube quite frozen over.  
 696. The Thames frozen 6 weeks, and booths built thereon.  
 827. Frost in England 9 weeks.  
 859. Carriages used on the Adriatic sea.  
 908. Most rivers in England frozen 2 months.  
 923. The Thames frozen 13 weeks.  
 987. Frost lasted 120 days. Began December 22.  
 998. The Thames frozen 5 weeks.  
 1035. Severe frost, June 14, covered fruits destroyed.  
 1063. The Thames frozen 14 weeks.  
 1076. Frost in England from November to April.  
 1114. Several wooden bridges carried away by the ice.  
 1407. Frost lasted 16 weeks.  
 1434. Frost from Novemb. to Feb. The Thames frozen to Gravesend.  
 1603. Frost for 13 weeks.  
 1739. A frost which lasted 9 weeks. Began December 14.  
 1747. Severe frost in Russia.  
 1760. The same in Germany.  
 1778. Thames frozen below bridge—booths upon it.  
 1795. Severe frost in England.  
 1814. Intense frost. Thames frozen, and all sorts of amusements upon it.  
 1826. Severe frost in England, Jan. 14.

### THE PUPIL OF MERLIN.

(Imitated from the German of Goethe.)

GREAT Merlin of old had a magical trick  
 For putting in motion a talisman stick,  
 That would do at his pleasure whatever he wanted;  
 He had only to speak and the stick was enchanted;  
 Off it set in a twinkling and came in a crack,  
 He ordered it out, and he whistled it back.  
 A youthful disciple of Merlin's own school,  
 A would-be magician, half knave and half fool,  
 Once peeping through cranny, the secret found out,  
 Heard the "conjuro te," saw the stick fly about;  
 'Twas enough, having seen, he must try the experiment:  
 So he scamper'd off home in the height of his merriment,

With a substitute broomstick to ape the magician,

Repeated the charm and enjoin'd his commisaries.  
 "Stick! conjuro te! I command thee to bring  
 A bucket of water just fresh from the spring,  
 In order to wash the place tidy and clean,  
 And render my cottage the pride of the green."  
 So soon as he uttered this eloquent spell,  
 It vanished *instantly*, he mimic'd so well;  
 Then as quickly return'd to his great satisfaction,  
 Conducting the bucket with secret attraction.  
 Then again sallied out and returned with a second:  
 A third, fourth, fifth, six—full a dozen he reckon'd.

Again and again comes the troublesome evil;  
 He heartily wishes the stick at the devil,  
 And endeavours to stop this strange beson e-stabulary

By repeating by heart all his magic vocabulary.  
 In vain; the said stick is as deaf as a post,  
 And frightens him ready to give up the ghost.  
 "What, holla! neighbours mine! oh the shocking disaster!"

The louder he hollows the stick goes the faster.  
 In this wretched dilemma he loses his wits,  
 He rages, he swears, and he whimpers, by fits;  
 Beats his breast, pulls his hair, and defaces his face,  
 Still the stick and the bucket continued the chase.

The comical scene would have killed you with laughter,  
 The stick led the way and the bucket sped after  
 Provoked at the sight, he endeavour'd to catch it,  
 Gets a rap on the knuckles—he seizes a hatchet,  
 In a violent passion he chops it in sunder;  
 This stratagem proves a most exquisite blunder;  
 It produces a double stick, i. e. another,  
 That follows the steps of its hard-hearted brother.

Both together they fly, both their buckets they bring,  
 And around him a deluge of water they fling.  
 In brief, had not fortune the urchin befriended,  
 There is no telling where might the mischief have ended;  
 When, as good luck would have it, old Merlin appear'd,  
 In full magicals robed, with his grim-looking beard,

Who deliver'd him straight, stopp'd the sticks in a trice,  
 And dismiss'd the young chap with a word of advice;

"Only see what a pickle your rashness has cost,  
 And thank your good genius that all was not lost!  
 Remember, in future, my parting command,  
 That you never attempt what you don't understand;

And whatever you do, that success may attend,  
 Ere you think of beginning consider the end."

### THE CURACH, OR WICKER-BOAT.

THE *Curach*, or boat of leather and wicker, may appear to the moderns to have been a very unsafe vehicle in tem-



pestuous seas; yet our forefathers fearlessly committed themselves in such slight pinnaces, to the mercy of the most violent weather. They were much in use in the Western Isles, even long after the art of building boats was introduced into those parts by the Norwegians. The size of some of the *Curaachs* must have been considerable; for Marianus Scotus makes mention of three Irishmen who came in a wicker-boat, without sails or oars, and landed in Cornwall, after a voyage of seven days. Sidonius Apollinaris, *Carm. vii.* observes that the Saxon pirates of his time frequently crossed the British seas in such boats.

A ruder and more ancient vessel was the *birliinn* of the Gael and of other people; a word compounded of the Celtic *bir* and *liann* (a pool-log), which was a hollowed trunk, or clumsy canoe. Pennant deviates from his usual accuracy, when he derives the word *birliinn* from the Norwegian *byrdynga*. — *Armstrong's Gaelic Dictionary.*

#### MOLUCCA NUTS, OR MOLUCCA BEANS.

THESE productions are, strange to say, found on the shores of the western isles of Scotland, where the kernels of them are used as a cure for diarrhoea and dysentery. In what way Molucca nuts should be cast ashore among the Hebrides, has been explained in the following manner: These nuts, or beans, are the seeds of the *Dolichos urens* *Gaillardia Bonduc*. *G. Bonducella*, and *Mimosa Scandens* of Linneus, natives of Jamaica. They grow in vast quantities along the rivers of that island, and are generally supposed to be dropped into the water, and carried into the sea; from thence by tides and currents, and the predominancy of the east wind, to be forced through the Gulf of Florida, into the North American Ocean; in the same manner as the *Sargasso*, a plant growing among rocks in the seas around Jamaica. When arrived in that part of the Atlantic, they fall in with westerly winds, which blow two-thirds of the year in that tract, and which may help to waft them to the shores of the Hebrides.—*Ibid.*

#### KOTZEBUE.

THE play of this celebrated author, which, on our stage, is called the *Strangor*, produced very contrary effects when it was brought forward on the *Theatre Francois* in Paris, as is evinced by the two following anecdotes:—A young man being violently in love with the sister of

his friend, solicited her hand, obtained his request, and impatiently waited for the day which was to confirm his felicity. On the evening previous to the day fixed upon for the sacred ceremony, he accompanied his mistress, her mother, and brother, to a representation of the piece here alluded to. In all the interesting scenes the young lover appeared greatly affected; he saw his future brother-in-law shedding tears, and his mother weeping abundantly, while the young lady smiled with contempt at the whole exhibition! After the play was over, he handed the ladies to their carriage, and immediately took leave of them, whispering, as follows, to his constant friend and inseparable companion: "I shall never marry your sister! the woman who can, without being affected, witness the contrition of an honest mind that has erred, is not a fit wife for a man of honour."—Some days after, a gentleman, rather advanced in the vale of life, was at the same play, listening to every sentence with philosophical attention; he happened, however, to cast his eyes into one of the opposite boxes, where he saw a young lady of his acquaintance (whom he was on the eve of marrying) bathed in tears, and visibly moved by the passing scene of woe. The tender interest the young lady took in the representation was attended by bad consequences for her. Her rich admirer wrote to her the next day, and surrendered every pretension to her person.

#### The Gatherer.

"I am but a Gatherer and disposer of other men's stuff."—*Wotton.*

#### REFLECTION.

WHEN you are disposed to be vain of your mental acquisitions, look up to those who are more accomplished than yourself, that you may be fired with emulation; but when you feel dissatisfied with your circumstances, look down on those beneath you, that you may learn contentment.

MONTESQUIEU says, "Study has been my sovereign remedy for all the calamities of life that have fallen to my lot. An hour's attentive reading has blunted the edge of the most acute sorrow with which I was ever afflicted, and made me smile at disappointments that at first affected me deeply. None can ever be truly contemptible, except those who have formed, and live in bad connexions. A man of sense and virtue, whatever may be his situation in life, is a valuable companion."

### EPITAPH ON AN IGNORANT SOT.

FIVE letters his life and his death will express:  
He scarce knew A. B. C., and he died of X. S!

A CERTAIN sergeant, who was apt to get a little testy in argument, was one day reminded by Mr. Erskine, that he should not *shew anger*, but *shew cause*.

A YOUNG man, boasting of his health and constitutional stamina, once, in the hearing of Wewitzer, the player, was asked to what he chiefly attributed so great a happiness? "To what, sir! to laying in a good foundation to be sure. I make a point, sir, to eat a great *deal* every morning."—"Then I presume, sir, (re-marked Wewitzer,) you usually breakfast in a *timber* yard."

### SHREWS.

THE ladies of Albert Durer and Berghem were both shrews, and the former compelled that great genius to the hourly drudgery of his profession, merely to gratify her own sordid passion. At length, in despair, Albert ran away from his Tisiphone; she weeded him back, and not long afterwards he fell a victim to her furious disposition. He died of a broken heart!

It is told of Berghem's wife, that she would not allow that excellent artist to quit his occupation; and she contrived an odd expedient to detect his indolence. The artist worked in a room above her; ever and anon she roused him by thumping a stick against the ceiling, while the obedient Berghem answered by stamping his foot, to satisfy Mrs. Berghem that he was not napping!

### EPITAPH IN WEST GRIMSTEAD CHURCH-YARD.

VAST strong was I, but yet I did die,  
And in my grave asleep do lye;  
My grave is stoned round about,  
But I hope that God will find me out.

ELSEVIER used to employ women to correct the press, and he assigned as his reason, that they kept their eyes on the matter before them, and that, as they understood nothing about it, their whole mind was occupied in taking care that there were no omissions; but that when he employed Greek and Latin scholars to perform the same duty, they attended to the merits of the work, and did not attend to the matter before their eyes.

### EPITAPH.

ANDREW THOMSON lieth here,  
Who had a mouth from ear to ear;  
Reader, tread lightly on his sod,  
For if he gape, you're gone, by—!

A PHYSICIAN, walking with one of his friends up Regent-street, said to the latter, "Let us avoid passing that pretty little woman that you see to the right. She has recognised me, and darts indignant looks this way. I have attended her husband, and—" "Oh! I understand, you have had the misfortune to despatch him."—"No, my friend, to save his life!"

AN illustrious person told Lord Chesterfield that he had drank six bottles of wine. "That," said his lordship, "is more than I can swallow."

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THE SUPPLEMENTARY NUMBER, which was published last Saturday, forming No. 226 of the MIRROR, contains two fine Engravings, and notices of the Annual Periodicals and Christmas Presents for the coming year, 1837.

Insertion shall be given to papers from G. W. N.; P. T. W.; Tim Tobykin; A. B. C.; J. G. S.; Baillie Nicol Jarvis; and I. H. C.; as early as possible.

We must entreat our friend A. B. C. to write more legibly. His last communication certainly embraces interesting topics, and the subject may be very cleverly managed, but we really despair of deciphering the characters.

M. L. B.'s pleasing drawing has been received, and is intended for the engraver.

B— has our thanks, but we cannot oblige him. The matter has been fully discussed by correspondents in former volumes.

We really thought the author of *The Dream* could have done better things.

Lara's poem is too lengthy for our pages; besides, the subject is not managed with much skill.

F. A. C. is thanked. The error was very early discovered, and corrected.

We can offer W. G. A. no encouragement.

J. M. Y.'s communication is highly acceptable.

E. F. G.'s love-rhymes are of very low order. We are overdone with rhyme.

F. W. D.'s suggestion shall be attended to.

I. W. U.; H. W.; J. W. Eagle; J. H., re-main under consideration.

Alphens's letter is political.

Acrostics are inadmissible.

We can do nothing with the following articles:—T. D.; T. W.; *The Balance of Comfort*; G. S.

*The Old Seaman* has been inserted in the first volume of the MIRROR, p. 120.

What authority has H. S. for supposing the allegory to have been written by so celebrated a character?

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